

THE CHURCHES OF FLORENCE.*

We have already referred to the churches of Florence, as edifices especially interesting in the student of architectural history. In one, we discern the decline of the Romanesque, and the approach of the Gothic style; in another, the dissolution of Gothic architecture, under the influence of Brunelleschi. We are able to study the rise of that important feature of architecture, the cupola, in the dome of Sta. Maria del Fiore: in the gates of the baptistry we find the finest specimens of metal work that were ever fabricated, and which

Michael Angelo said were "worthy to be the gates of Paradise." Indeed, the churches of Florence present so many objects of interest, that it is difficult to find room for the most important particulars within present limits. Including those which are attached to monasteries, they are also numerous. Richa, who wrote upon them in 1754, has devoted no less than ten quarto volumes to their history and description. We subjoin a list of the most interesting, with the names of the architects, and the dates of the principal parts, arranged in regular order:—

Gothic, is still designed in some accordance with the spirit of that style, and it is supposed, not without reason, that the Dominicans required that the mediæval style should be observed, though Alberti himself was one of the revivers of the Italian. This facade is composed of different coloured marbles, a mode used also in the cathedral. The architects of the original church and conventual buildings were monks, educated in their profession by the Dominicans. It is worthy of note, that so little did Michael Angelo condemn the forms of Gothic architecture, that he called this church his *inamorate*.

The church of Sta. Maria del Fiore may be described as a cross church, the head and arms being formed by semi-octagonal projections. The space at the intersection is an octagon. The nave is four arches in length. The building was commenced by Arnolfo, who designed the cupola, but did not live to execute it. He left a complete model of the building, which unfortunately has been destroyed. After Arnolfo's death, in 1300, the works were carried on at various periods by Giotto, Orsagna, Taddeo Gaddi, and Lorenzo Filippi. Giotto erected the campanile, which stands beside the front of the building, and which it was his intention to surmount with a spire. In 1420 Brunelleschi was chosen from a number of architects to carry out his celebrated plan for constructing the dome, which he accomplished by an arrangement of centering, now well understood, but which in the first instance subjected him to ridicule.—The baptistry, which adjoins the cathedral, is most celebrated for the gates already mentioned. One of them was by Andrea Pisano, and the two others by Lorenzo Ghiberti. Casts of these are in the School of Design in this metropolis, but they are by no means equal to the originals. 30,798 florins was the price paid to the artist for these works. The building itself, as shewn by a section in the work of Richa, much resembles the Pantheon. Indeed, by many it is supposed to have had a Roman origin, whilst others assert that, though Roman in style, it was built by Theodolina, the Lombard Queen. The interior of the cupola is covered with mosaics. The pavement is curious, and represents the signs of the Zodiac, with the sun in the centre, surrounded by the following strange line, which can be read either way:—

"En giro torte sol ciclos et rotor igne."

The church of Santa Croce, the Westminster Abbey of Florence, is rich in works of art of all kinds, and monuments to illustrious men, amongst whom is Michael Angelo. The style of architecture is gothic, and, as in many of the Florentine churches, the windows are rich in stained glass. The inner cloister was built by Brunelleschi, and contains the chapel of the Pazzi. Amongst the monuments, that to Marzupini is an interesting example of the early style of the revival. It has the frequent form of the sarcophagus, with a figure on the lid, a type, perhaps derived from those of ancient Etruria, copies of which are in the British Museum.

The church called Or' San' Michele was originally built as a granary, by Arnolfo, but miraculous powers having been ascribed to an image of the Virgin, the building was converted into a church. The windows are said to be extremely beautiful; they are circular headed, with intersecting tracery. The style is in the main gothic, but the building has not often been delineated. It is much enriched with painting and sculpture. The shrine, or tabernacle is an elaborate piece of work. It is said, that Orsagna would not allow of any mortar or cement, but had the pieces clamped with metal, and the workmanship is excellent.—The Carthusian monastery, on the road to Sienna, is an extensive building, remarkable for the perfection of its arrangements for the accommodation of strangers. It is given in the "Architecture Toscane," by M.M. Grandjean de Montigny and A. Famin, which work may also be referred to for the plans of most of the Florentine churches.—The church of Santa Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi, which, like most of those described, is attached to a convent, is curious as preserving the type of the basilica, in the atrium or cloister in front. This cloister has Ionic columns.—The piazza

Date.	Buildings, &c.	Architect.
1013 Of early date. Vestiges of Romanesque	San. Miniato; without the walls of the city Santi Apostoli. Santa Felice.	Niccolò Pisano.
1380 1386, original church.	Santa Trinita Church of the Annunziata. — Little cloister, or atrium. Sta. Maria Novella.	Fra Niccolò, and Fra Ristoro; Fra Giovanni de' Campi. Fra Giovanni da Nervesa. Arnolfo di Lapo.
1387—1390	— Campanile, chapter-house, and sacristy Or' San. Michele (the original granary)	Arnolfo. Arnolfo. Arnolfo; Giotto; Taddeo Gaddi; Orsagna; Lorenzo Filippi; Brunelleschi.
1394 1398—1472	Battisterio di San Giovanni Santa Croce Santa Maria del Fiore	Andrea Pisano. Taddeo Gaddi; Orsagna.
— 1398	Bronze gate, at the south; Battisterio di San Giovanni	Orsagna. Orsagna.
1397—1398	Or' San. Michele, the church	Ghiberti. Brunelleschi.
1341	The Carthusian monastery near Florence, on the road to Sienna	Brunelleschi; designed by Arnolfo Brunelleschi.
1348—1347	Tobacco in the church Or' San. Michele.	Brunelleschi. Brunelleschi.
1400—1434	Two bronze gates, at the north and east; Bat- tisterio di San. Giovanni	Michelozzi. Giovanni di Bologna.
Probably about 1407	Oratorio degli Angeli	Leon Baptista Alberti.
1410	Santa Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi.	Brunelleschi; finished 36 years after his death.
1420—1444	Cupola of Sta. Maria del Fiore	Alberti designed; Luca Fancelli executed.
1420	Chapel of the Pazzi; church of Sta. Croce.	Alberti. Brunelleschi; Giuliano da San Gallo.
1421—1444	Parson and hospital of the Incoronata (Spedale degli Incurabili)—Piazza della Annunziata	Simone Pollajuolo, called "Cro- naca."
1425	San. Lorenzo	Andrea Contucci di Monte San- severo.
A little earlier	Sagraeria Vecchia	Simone Pollajuolo, called "Cro- naca."
1440	Chapel of the Annunziata; church of the Ap- ostolici	Desiderio da Settignano, sculp- tor.
About 1440 (front completed, 1777)	San. Marco	Antonio da San Gallo.
— 1467	— Interior. Chapel of the Rucchi family, in atrium of San. Pancrasio.	Michael Angelo. Giorgio Vasari. Ammanati.
(Original church, 1678; 1478 — 1731)	San. Pancrasio.	Donato; parts by Michael Angelo. Giov. Cecconi.
1470	Santo Spirito, and general plan of the Augus- tine Convent.	Matteo Nigetti; Bernardo Silvani
1478	Choir of the church of the Annunziata	Alfonso Parigi.
1480—1477	The facade, Sta. Maria Novella	
1420	Cloister in front of Sta. Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi	
Probably about 1490	Great cloister of the church of the Annunziata	
Probably about 1490	Vault of the vestibule of the sacristy, in church of Santo Spirito	
About 1490	Sacristy of Santo Spirito	
End of 15th century, subse- quent to Vasari	Tomb of Carlo Marzupini, in the church of Sta. Croce.	
Probably about 1500	Portico, opposite to the portico of the hospi- tal; Piazza della Annunziata	
About 1534	Sagraeria Nuova; church of San Lorenzo	
About 1534	Medicene Chapel; ditto.	
Probably about 1550	The Laurentian Library; ditto	
1564	The altar; Sta. Maria Novella	
Probably about 1568	Second Cloister; Santo Spirito	
1561—1564	Chapel of the Gaddi; Sta. Maria Novella	
1564	Portico of the church of the Annunziata	
1564	San. Michele	
16th century	Church of the Franciscan Convent, near San. Miniato.	
Probably about 1640	First Cloister; Santo Spirito	
	Church of the Carmine. La Badia.	

It is in their interiors that the churches of Florence are most interesting. Their facades, in many instances, are in a most unfinished state; even that of the cathedral has not been completed. Gothic architecture is found in many examples, but differs greatly from that of other parts of Europe. Churches of this style are massive, like the palaces which surround them, and they are wanting in the pinnacles, and flying buttresses, which lend so great a charm to all on this side the Alps. Those features of the style, which are found in Tuscany, seem to have been introduced from Germany; an opinion which is supported by the statements of Casarionus. It was practised in Florence, chiefly by Arnolfo; but it is known, that that architect did not neglect the national style, never extinct in Italy. It is supposed, that the foreign manner was introduced by the Franciscans and Dominicans, who practised it, after it had been abandoned in other instances, and who appear to have understood its value, as expressive of feelings of devotion. The style was called *Tedesco*.

* *Monumenti letterari della Chiesa Fiorentina, divise in 1000 Quartieri. Opere di Giuseppe Richa, della Compagnia di Gesù. Accademia Fiorentina, e Sede Colombaria. 1754-62. 10 vols. 4to. Firenze.*

Stained glass exists in most of the churches, both in those of Gothic, and of later date.

Of the churches of Florence, few have of late received so much attention as that of San Miniato. It is divided into three aisles by two rows of columns, and consists of nave and choir, the latter being raised a considerable height above the level of the former, and reached by staircases. Beneath the choir is a crypt. The style is Romanesque. The church is in all respects a most interesting example, and has several early mosaics and frescoes. Each window of the apse is lighted by a single slab of alabaster, similar to the ancient *Lapis specularis*, and the light, shining through, is described as having a very pleasing effect.—The church of *Santi Apostoli* is also a Romanesque building. It is said, that it was the study of this edifice which first led Brunelleschi to adopt his characteristic style.—Santa Trinita was originally a Gothic church, but has received later additions.—Sta. Maria Novella is one of the few churches of which the front is complete. The campanile is in the Romanesque style, but the church is Gothic. The facade, however, being completed by Alberti, though not strictly

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